

BLOWIN'

The page for musicians
Edited by Tony Mitchell

THIN LIZZY's current line-up is the result of a conscious decision by vocalist/bass player Phil Lynot to wipe out the old Lizzy and start afresh. That's why he recruited two complete unknowns into the band, one of whom was California born-and-bred guitarist Scott Gorham.

The addition of Scott and guitarist Brian Robertson seemed to be just what was needed to pull Lizzy out of the doldrums created by problems with illness and personnel changes — principally the loss of original Thin Lizzy guitarist Eric Bell.

"Phil wanted a guitar player who would bring the band up to world status," says Scott. "So when Eric left, he wanted Gary Moore. But Gary was more into the thinking kind of music — he's now in Colosseum — and so Phil ended up deciding to get two new, fresh guys and start again.

Break

"It would have been easy for him to form a band just to play 'Whiskey In The Jar' but he didn't really want to do that. He felt it would have been selling out. So he got in new people and we all knew that if it worked, it worked, and if it didn't, well..."

For Scott, joining the band was an incredible break. He'd come over from the States and managed to join a pub band in which he had a lot of laughs, and went straight from there into Thin Lizzy.

"I arrived in England with my guitar, which was a Les Paul copy I'd bought in the States," he recalls. "I contacted my brother-in-law, who was playing in Bees Make Honey, and through him I met various people, including Eddie Leech, who now plays drums with Slack Alice."

At that time Eddie was playing drums with Fast Buck, a band well known on the London pub circuit, and in which the principal figure was bass player/singer Charlie Harper. This band rehearsed in a room over Charlie's hairdressing salon, and Charlie was looking for another guitarist.

"When this opportunity came along, I grabbed it," says Scott. "They really welcomed me into Fast Buck, which was great for someone who was really new here and I had a lot of fun in the four or five months I was playing with them."

But through his brother-in-law, Scott was meeting other people, and he heard that Thin Lizzy was looking for a guitarist. Lizzy were not known in the States, so he didn't know much about them but decided to go for an audition anyway.

Guitar

"It was the first audition I'd been to in my whole life," he confesses with genuine awe. "I was scared to death. Phil looked ominous when I turned up and Brian was really moody."

"But they decided to see if they could teach me a song and I picked up the first one real fast so they taught me another one and I picked that up, and... so it went. Anyway, at the end of the audition we swapped phone numbers. I said: 'If you want me, call me', and then Phil said: 'Why don't you come back again tomorrow?'"

"Then I thought, well, there must be some chance. And that same night Phil called and asked me to join."

One of the first things they

decided that Scott would have to do was change his guitar. That was something that caused a bit of soul searching. Scott explains:

"It was a black Les Paul copy I bought in LA for 60 dollars. It felt just right and sounded fine with my 50-watt Traynor amp, but they said: 'You can't go on stage with a copy' so they said they'd get me another guitar."

And what he got to replace that much-loved copy was a sunburst Les Paul De Luxe. He obviously preferred Gibsons to Fenders then, I remarked.

"Actually I used to have a Strat and, d'you know, it took me two years to realise that I didn't like it. I ended up selling it to the guy in Supertramp," he confides.

And what about amplification?

"When I first joined Thin Lizzy I had a Hi-Watt 100-watt

stack. But it seemed to get a really piercing sound so I changed to a Marshall 100-watt top with Fender Showman bottom fitted with Gauss speakers.

"That was great — I really like the on-stage sound I got with it because it was real ballsy and gutsy. But our sound engineer said it was really stinging, so I tried a straight Marshall stack. That gives a sound that's not as clean as with the Gauss speakers, and we also found that the speakers in the Marshall were more reliable."

So now Scott has found a set-up which suits both him and the sound engineer. I asked him if he'd experimented with any new gear — solid state amps, for example.

"No, I've always gone with valves. That goes for the rest of the band as well — we've never

had any trouble with valve amps."

A choice made initially, perhaps, by a desire to emulate to some extent the sound of other guitarists Scott admired in his more formative days. And these, for the record, were chiefly Eric Clapton and Jeff Beck.

"The first guy who really blew me out was Eric Clapton," says Scott. "He had the vibrato thing just right — he did it right on the note. Beck was my other main influence. Hendrix? Well... you just sat back and listened to that because, you know, you didn't know how he did most of it!"

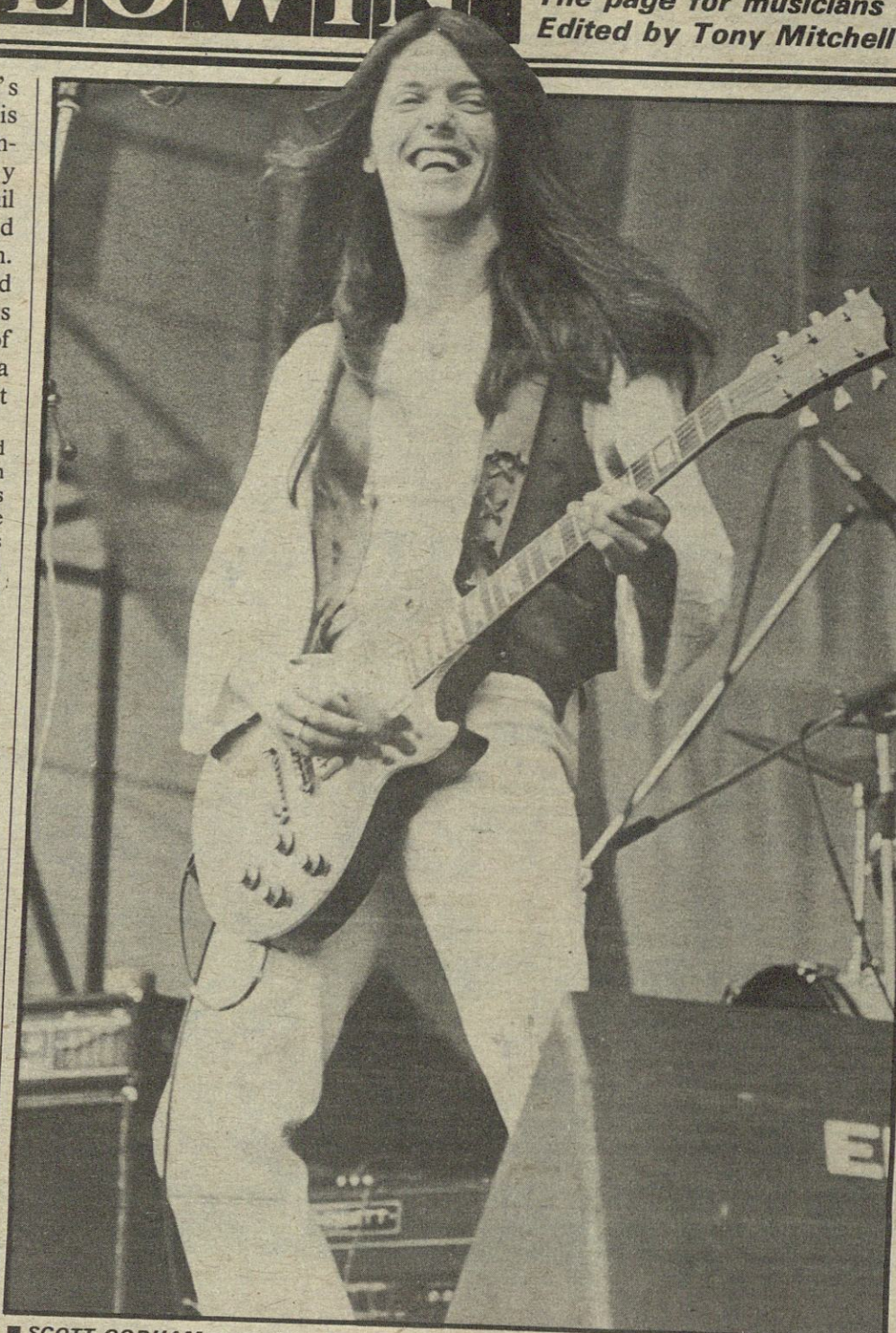
Talking of those early days when moulds were formed, Scott explains that the music scene in LA was — and is — somewhat different from here.

Sessions

"There are just so many musicians there. We weren't even semi-pros like over here. People just got together to have a good time. You'd get to hear about a gig and you'd just get a bunch of people together who could do it — rather like informal sessions. Also you have to realise that musicians in America are much more into jam sessions than they are here."

"Guitars and everything are much cheaper in America. I think it's really bad for musicians in this country that they have to pay so much for instruments."

And talking of paying for instruments, you may like to know that Scott is in the market for a Gibson Firebird. I wouldn't sell him mine so he's forced to look elsewhere. When we talked, he wasn't sure exactly which model it was he wanted but I gather it's probably the reverse body mark five or seven that he'd prefer. If anyone has one to sell, they can contact me and I'll gladly put them in touch with Mr Gorham.



■ SCOTT GORHAM: scared to death at audition

Scott 'n' roll with Lizzy

The information correct at time of press, but subject to change. Please check venues carefully.

WE

ALBION DANCE, GLADSTONES, House, London, NW1
AMAZING BAY, PERS, Baileys, Ne
APRIL, Pavilion, V
CHRIS BARBER, Centre, Spalding
BEANO, Nevada B
BETHNAL, Holy T
BIG JOHN'S R
CIRCUS, Baileys, 363151
ACKER BILK, Cleethorpes
BILLY J. KRAM, Carlisle (Carlisle 230
BONE IDOL, Br Road, London, NW1
BRASS 'N' B, Ferryboat, Northumb
CAFE DES ARTIST, London, SW10 (01-1
CANDLEWICK GR, North, Eccles
CAROUSEL, Carol
Hinckley
CEILIDH, Waldon Road, Croydon
CLIMAX BLUES B
OF MADNESS / S
STEVE MARRIOTT
THIN LIZZIE, Oly Hammersmith Road, 930 6393
COBARUS, Plough, London, SW9 (01-27
SIAN DANIELS, O Grove, London, W11
LONNIE DONEGAN, mingham
RAY DOYLE, Mart Rosslyn Hill, London 5203
ERUPTION, La D mingham
FBI, Dingwalls, Camd NW1 (01-267 4967)
FREEDOM, Caesars R On-Tweed
FRUUPP, Hall of Arts
GONZALEZ, Hatchett don, W1
GRAPEVINE, Baileys Eastbourne
GUYS & DOLLS, Kin
HARMONY STREET, pool
CHIP HAWKES, Foot
HEAVY METAL K Wardour Street, Lond 6603
HOOKER, Elizabeth mingham
TOMMY HUNT, JB's, 53597
NEIL INNES & FA North End Road, Lond 6071
IVY LEAGUE/STON Frenchmans, Fishgu 3579
JASPER, Baileys, She 29519
JEVUSHTA, Black R Nr Matlock (Darley Dal
JOHNNY JOHNSON BANDWAGON, N Camden, London, N1 (0
KILBURN AND THE H Newlands, Stuart Road, don, SE15 (01-639 056
KLUTZ, Athersley Social LEGAL ACTION, Water mond
BILL LE SAGE & TON Bulls Head, Barnes Bri SW13 (01-876 5241)
LIGHT FANTASTIC, Ca Cambridge
LIMELIGHT, Golden Sutton-in-Ashfield (Sutton 2690)
LIVERPOOL EXPRES Club, Whitechurch
LOS PARAGUAYOS, Hotel, Ayr
MAC & KATIE KISSOO Ballroom, Dunstable
MAGNUM OPUS II, W Club, RAF Cranwell Sleafor
MATILDA'S BUSH BAN Old Swan, Kensington Ch London, W8
MUNGO JERRY, Baileys 24000
MAX COLLIES' RHYTH 100 Club, Oxford Street, L (01-636 0933)
GEORGE MELLY, Rom Frith Street, London, W 0747
MR JONES, British Legion
MUNGO JERRY, Baileys, 24000
PETER NOONE & HE HERMITS, Fiesta, Stockton
OLD WILL FOLK ENTER COMPANY, Folk Club, Che
ORIGINAL EASTSIDE ST Railway Bell, George Lar Woodford
PACO PENA'S FLAMENC Queen Elizabeth Hall, South E don, SE1 (01-928 3191)
TONY PILSON, Bunje's, Street, London, WC2 (01-240
PLUMMET AIRLINES, Ke Russell Gardens, London, W1 3245
RAVING RUPERT, Porterho Retford (Retford 4981)
REAL THING, Ivanhoes, Huddersfield 41336
RED BEANS & RICE, Blue Newquay